Branson Salutes America's Veterans!

Branson, Missouri has welcomed and been a meeting place for veterans long before it became the patriotic thing to do. With its central U.S. location veterans have just naturally gravitated to Branson for reunions, entertainment, and our genuine appreciation and hospitality. Every day is Veteran's Day in Branson and we are ready to help you with planning your vacation or reunion, whether you are an individual, a few buddies or large group.

Branson is proud of the Veterans that served to protect our way of life and the shows in town reflect that pride with a salute to the men and women that served.

In 1994 The Branson Veterans Task Force adopted a mission statement that says it all: "The Branson Veterans Task Force has established Branson, Missouri, as the year-round, national home for all Veterans, active duty military personnel and their families."

The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing and supporting the special events we hold throughout the year in honor of our veterans and their families who have served us through peacetime and war, on the front lines and behind the scene.

Branson has welcomed millions of veterans and their families by honoring them not just on holidays but year-round in our shows and all other venues. Special veterans events are scheduled throughout the year by the Branson Veteran's Task Force, culminating in Veteran's Week which ends on Veteran's Day. Each year a different group is designated for special recognition. In November, Branson is home to the largest veterans homecoming in the U.S.A. "Your Best Friend in Branson" specializes in military reunions.
USS MOUNT MCKINLEY  
Winter Newsletter 2004  
Published Quarterly by the  
USS Mount McKinley Association

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Ship’s Store – Steve Schermerhorn
Master-at-Arms – Bud White
Historian – Dennis Aloia

Visit us @
www.ussmtmckinley.com

DONATIONS TO THE ASSOCIATION  
Thanks to these members for their donations to the  
USS Mount McKinley Association during the last quarter.  
There were no donations to the association for this quarter…..

USS Mount McKinley Association  
Statement of Financial Condition  
As of December 31, 2003

Income:
Ship's Store Sales                                                  4014.70
Less Cost of Goods Sold                                        2815.21
Gain on Ship's Store Sales                                         1199.49
Advertisement                                                      50.00
Dues                                                               5489.00
Donations                                                           756.00
Interest                                                           78.87
Total Income                                                        7573.36

Expenses:
Equipment                                                          142.50
Newsletter                                                      3333.52
Postage                                                           132.25
Ships Store Shipping & Supplies                                   460.96
Supplies                                                          290.39
Telephone & Bank Charges                                         12.70
Plaques & Awards                                                   448.81
Web Service                                                       335.35
Total Expenses                                                     5156.48
Net Income-Operations                                             2416.88

Reunion Income-2003                                               20730.00
Reunion Expenses-2003                                             19379.44
Reunion Income over Expenses                                     1350.56
Reunion Deposit-2004                                             -200.00
Total Income Year to Date                                         3567.44
Cash January 1, 2003                                              13263.48
Ships Store Inventory January 1, 2003                            4287.41
Add Income as of December 31, 2003                               3567.44
Add Prepaid Life Dues                                            725.00
Total                                                            21843.33
Cash-Bank Of America                                              6323.40
Cash-Zurich Money Market                                         10965.81
Cash-Prepaid Dues-Not available for operations                   725.00
Total Cash December 31, 2003                                     18014.21
Ships Store Inventory, December 31, 2003                        3829.12
Total Assets                                                       21843.33

Submitted By: William K. Ellis, Treasurer
Greetings to you all in the New Year. I hope and pray it will be a good year for you and our country and especially ask you to remember our service personnel and leaders in your prayers. It is easy to get caught up in our daily lives and activities and forget how fortunate we are and the sacrifices some are making for us. As I look at the strife around the world, I recognize how blessed we are to be Americans and how much we owe to our military, past and present, which includes members of the USS Mount McKinley Association.

Soon in the new year, a number of us will be getting a dues notice. I encourage everyone and thank you in advance, for paying your dues promptly and for two years. Paying your dues for two years (or more) saves a tremendous amount of work for Dick Armstrong and Bill Ellis and they have enough to do keeping our records updated without having to send out reminders. Another option for you is to become a Life Member and join the growing list of Paid-for-Life Members.

It is time to mark your calendar and start planning to come to the next reunion in Branson, MO., September 8-12. We are going to have another outstanding reunion and I'm looking forward to seeing you there as well as some new members.

We would like to increase the number of newspapers that will publish our Reunion Notice, so I have a special request to each of you reading this. Please get the name and mailing address of 2 or 3 newspapers in your area and send them to me. We will then send the reunion information for them to publish and hopefully reach more Mount McKinley Shipmates.

Thank you,
Dwight Janzen

Dick Armstrong is reminding all of us to get those dues in. If your newsletter is marked with a red marker, that means your dues are now payable.

This picture was donated by Chief John Moon. It was taken during the January/February 1949 exercise called MICOWEX which was to test cold weather conditions for landing the Marines.
Overlooking the wonders of the Ozarks, the 10-story Radisson Hotel is the premier hotel with the premier location in Branson. Located in the heart of the theater district next to Andy Williams’, Bobby Vinton’s, and the Grand Palace Theaters. Just off the Highway 76 strip, the Radisson Hotel offers a breathtaking example of the Neon to Nature diversity of fun and excitement waiting for you in Branson. Visitors of all ages are provided a wealth of entertainment options in Branson. Whether you are nine or ninety the entertainment will keep your toes tappin’. Music shows range from Country to Gospel, Broadway to Big Band, Easy Listening to Pop.

One of the safest cities in America, Branson is less than a one-day drive from half of the U.S. population, making Branson convenient, as well as affordable.

Our Branson Reunion is set for September 8 through 12, and offers a wide variety of entertainment for all ages and taste…. We locked our room rates in at $80.00 per night and these rates will be honored three days before and after our event for those wishing to arrive early or stay longer. ALL RESERVATIONS for rooms must be made directly to the hotel NO LATER then August 11, 2004 to receive these special rates. Make sure to mention the association when making your reservation. You can call the toll free number, 1-800-333-3333, calling the hotel direct at (417) 335-5767, or you can make your reservations on-line by visiting our special web page provided by the hotel at www.radisson.com/bransonmo/usmsmtmckinley. The Radisson is a full service hotel and is in the heart of the theater district. There are 500 rooms on ten floors with over 8,000 Sq. Ft. of banquet rooms available to us. There is also a “Hall of Heroes” with over 200 feet of photo’s and memorabilia honoring service men, women and active military.

Branson weather in September is usually an average of 69 degrees.

**Location by Ground**

Branson is located in Southwest Missouri and can be accessed off US Highway 65, 11 miles north of the Arkansas border and 39 miles south of I-44 and Springfield, Missouri. Branson is approximately 250 miles for St. Louis and 220 miles from Kansas City.

**Air Transportation**

The Springfield/Branson Regional Airport services all of Southwest Missouri with six airlines and 70 daily arrival and departures. The airport is 43 miles and approximately an hours drive from Branson. Airlines with service to Springfield/Branson Regional Airport include: American Eagle, Northwest Airlines, United?United Express, and US Airways. For more information, log on at www.sgf-branson-airport.com or call 417-869-0300.
Well here we go again. The start of another year and it’s time to look forward to another reunion. This one is in Branson, MO. and will be Sept. 8 - 12th. In this issue you will find the hotel information. PLEASE make sure you get your reservations in to the hotel by August 11th so you get our special pricing. All the information is on page 4. I will be including additional information about the tours that we will be using in future newsletters and the usual information about meals too. I am including several tours that are available, but I do not have them set up yet so this is only to wet your appetite. More information will follow on them. Another thing to check out is the Barg trip that Darlene Long has in the works as a pre-reunion tour package. You can see additional info on this on page 9. You’ll have to contact her directly on this one as it isn’t an official part of the reunion. This is only a little bonus we offer to those who want a little longer vacation. Our association is still growing and hopefully by the end of this year we will reach our 1000th member. We only need 28 more. Here’s hoping we see a lot of new faces at the Branson Reunion. It was nice to see over 20 new attendees at that San Francisco reunion. Another thing to check out is the Barg trip that Darlene Long has in the works as a pre-reunion tour package.

There are two ways to write error free programs. Only the third one works.
The Don McGinnis’ Story.
Don McGinnis was, as myself, a radioman 3rd class petty officer. Our duty hours were midnight to breakfast, then off until noon meal, but during the off time we were required to perform the perpetual chipping, painting and chipping again. In our Division that duty or chore was for seamen and included 3/C petty officers. The staff’s seamen were not required to do this lousy chore. After lunch we were back on duty until supper-time. Then and only then were we allowed to go to our bunks and get some rest until the midnight shift. The opposite shift was even worse, because after breakfast at 6:00 am, you were on duty until the noon meal. After noon meal we were again chipping and painting and then chipping it out all over again. We did that until supper-time, then went on duty until midnight. On this shift, you could FORGET about getting some PEACEFUL REST until reveille at 0600.

continually going into our heads copying the Morse code. No wonder the Physic ward at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in Oakland had more radio operators than any other rate. A guy had to be half-nutty to be a radioman in the first place.

Now Don McGinnis was having some dental trouble with an impacted tooth. The Medical Dept. did not think he had a serious problem and sent him back to normal duty. After all, how can you measure pain? So, along with the pain and the throbbing, plus lack of rest and sleep, along with Morse code signals going into your head for the whole watch, I think you can see and understand what Don was about to do.

Don walked out onto the flying bridge on the starboard side and took a long dive into the Sea of Japan. It is a miracle the ship’s screw did not suck him under and into the screw. Immediately the man overboard alarm was sounded and everyone went to their pre-assigned quarters to have their heads counted. Well it happened that my duty was on the bridge with a radio headset on, very nearby the seaman who was on the helm. The Captain’s assigned station was also on the bridge, as was the Admiral’s, who was aboard as Commander of Amphibious Group One. The Captain ordered the helmsman to stay on course. The Admiral came running up to the bridge and ordered the helmsman and Officer-in-charge of the bridge to stop the ship. The Captain politely informed the Admiral that this was his ship and had ordered the men to stay the course. The Admiral informed the Captain that this was his damn Task Force and he ordered the ship stopped. The Mt. McKinley was command ship of Task Force 90. Some Japanese fishing boats were nearby and when Don went over the side he started swimming toward them. When our LCVP, which we had lowered for the rescue picked him out of the water, he began getting cramps. In the cold water he would not have lasted long enough to reach the fishing boats.

Well, I think the Captain’s run-in with the Admiral was his downfall, because in a couple of months he was transferred to an inland duty station at Macon, GA.

Some and other stories were submitted to me by Chuck back in January of 2001. I have over time included several in our My Mac Duty column. Sadly, Chuck recently passed away in May of 2003. I will continue to print his interesting stories in his memory.
New Members

969 Doyl E Pflueger  
EM2, E Div., 1967 – 70  
4370 Mayfield  
Metropolis Paducah, KY 42001-9730

970 Daniel M Krubs  
EM2, E div., 1957 – 59  
634 Crenshaw Ln  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45240-3920

971 Sherden B Cloer  
DC3, R Div., 1954 – 57  
3335 Crawford Dr. SE  
Cleveland, TN 37323-0256

972 Kenneth W Dandrow  
HN, H Div., 1962 – 64  
30 St Michaels Terrace  
Carmel, NY 10512-2007

If the mailing label on this newsletter was marked with a red marker, and if you have a Dues Notice in with the newsletter, please pay your dues as soon as possible.

Life Membership

At this years reunion and annual meeting, a resolution was passed to establish a paid-for-life membership option. The application for this is included in this newsletter as a “stuffer”. With a paid-for-life membership, you will also receive a certificate suitable for framing, and a “Life Member” membership card. We have had about 10 members sign up for this option. This also helps to keep our mailing cost down because we no longer have to keep sending you reminders about you dues being due. The rate schedule for Paid-for-Life membership is based on the American Legion schedule broken down by age, and is listed on the application.

It's Dues Time Again

Each year in January our membership fees become due. In the past few years we have been asking those who can, to pay for two years at a time. By doing this it really helps Dick & Bill with their work load. Our dues are still only $12.00 a year which is a very reasonable amount considering what your getting for it.

If the mailing label on this newsletter was marked with a red marker, and if you have a Dues Notice in with the newsletter, please pay your dues as soon as possible. When you don’t pay your dues that means a lot of extra work for our guys to keep sending reminders. You consideration is greatly appreciated. Again, please consider paying for two years at a time (of more if you want). Also, don’t forget about the new “Life Member” option.

Thank you from Bill & Dick….

What, after all is a halo? It’s just one more thing to keep clean.
The New...And Improved Ducks!

Although the original DUKWs were designed for ocean waters and military assaults, they were difficult to operate and maintain in the daily traffic and hilly terrain of Branson. Parts were becoming more difficult to acquire, and the 1940s technology was limiting modern safety, reliability, and passenger comfort needs. As a result, the Branson Ducks underwent extensive modifications, including hull renovations, a new electrical system, upgraded drive train with optional 2 or 4-wheel drive, disc brakes, as well as the addition of comfortable seats, weather protection, and lifesaving and fire-fighting equipment.

Always committed to continuous improvement and guest satisfaction, McDowell designed and built the first “Stretch Duck” in 1996. As the name implies, the hull of the original Duck was stretched just a few inches, achieving yet another unique tourist vehicle. Since its inception almost six years ago, 14 more have joined the fleet on roads in Branson and Seattle, and they have enjoyed great success in both locations.

Together, Bob McDowell; his wife, Ann; and their outstanding team of employees, have introduced many creative innovations to heighten your fun, adventure, and comfort. Travel over LAND AND WATER aboard ONE AMAZING VEHICLE for a sightseeing experience that is fun, informative, entertaining, and unique. Young or old, rich or poor, EVERYONE loves the history, nostalgia, fun and adventure of a Duck ride.

In 1993, Silver Dollar City set out to develop a unique lake attraction, themed after the majestic showboats of the 1800s that brought culture and entertainment to towns along the rivers of America.

The Showboat Branson Belle was constructed right here at White River Landing, and on August 12, 1994, was launched into the waters of Table Rock Lake as part of the nationally publicized Great Banana Launch Watch Party. Two tons of bananas packed the launching rails to provide a biodegradable, natural lubricant in place of substances such as grease or oil. Thus, while preserving the water quality of Table Rock Lake, the 2300 ton ship was able to glide into the water in only 9 seconds – at a speed of 14 knots.
The following information was passed along to me by Bill Ellis. It concerns an e-bay store that reproduces actual ships photo’s onto canvas. I have contacted them and they can also do additional photo’s for our members. If you are interested, the contact information is at the end of the description.

The prints are enlarged to 14x18in from originals and transferred onto high quality artists canvas. The prints are created one-at-a-time, using high-resolution photo printers. Our prints are created using pigmented archival ink on archival acid-free fine artist Canvas (the framed sample print is simulated to show how magnificent it will look on your wall after trimming and matting). This piece makes a great addition to your home, office, trophy room, or personal navy collection. You can see the various ships pictures offered by visiting them at http://www.stores.ebay.com/id=19643912&ssPageName=L2 or by e-mail to marcosn1@email.com

These prints sell for $24.95 at the e-bay store but I am trying to negotiate special pricing for our association. Check them out! They’re pretty good deals already.

---

**Barging through America**

**St. Louis Round Trip * September 2-8, 2004. Upper Mississippi River * 7 Days * 436 River Miles**

Begin this 7-day adventure on the upper Mississippi River with an overnight stay in St. Louis, Mo. Visit the Gleaming Gateway Arch and Westward Expansion Museum. You’ll love your visit to Cape Girardeau, Mo. Where we’ll have an overnight stay. Don’t miss the Missouri Wall of Fame stretching over 500 feet long and portraying the images of 45 famous Missourians. Encounter the amazing Confluence where strikingly different waters of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers meet. Explore the charm, history and beautiful countryside of the quaint river town of Chester, Ill. We’ll pass through *Lock 27* before experiencing the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. We’ll pass through *Mel Price Lock* before arriving in Grafton, Ill., a real American river town.

You’ll enjoy an overnight stay and have time to visit the quaint specialty shops and antique stores on Front Street. We’ll turn around at the point and head back to St. Louis, Mo., where your excursion will end.

All this can be arraigned for you by **Darlene Long**, one of our members wives. Give her a call at **1-800-833-3506** at Leez Travel X-Change in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. You can also e-mail Darlene at **dlong@leeztravel.com**

Darlene set up a wonderful post reunion cruise for about 35 of our members after the San Francisco reunion and they all had a great time. It’s just a little something extra for those who want a longer vacation trip.

Call Darlene and get all details and pricing for this great trip. Remember, this is not part of the reunion package, so you’ll have to book this yourself.

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<td>Mount McKinley Ship’s Patches</td>
<td>3 3/4” Mountain Patch, 5” Association Mermaid/Turtle Patch, 4 3/4” Atomic Test Patch, 6” Diesel Gang Patch, Snipe Force Patch, Task Force 90 Patch, Gator Navy Patch</td>
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(Please call Steve to receive a special order form for the Plaque)

Please include a “ship-to” mailing address
Make check payable to:
USS Mount McKinley Association & mail to:
Steve Schermerhorn
69272 County Rd 23, New Paris, IN 46553

Sorry, No Credit Cards…...

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Branson, Missouri
September 8th – 12th

The Mount McKinley in full camouflage paint in 1944

Www.USSMTMCKINLEY.COM
Visit our web site, it’s quite an experience!

USS Mount McKinley AGC-7

"Come and help us enjoy the bright lights of Frisco. Dick & Viv Armstrong".

REUNION INFORMATION:
http://home.wideopenwest.com/~pops222/